

from the Bay of Bengal (De Silva 1987).

ii) July 2, 1979, a 13 m specimen washed ashore at Beypore, Calicut (Lal Mohan 1992).

iii) February 20, 1983, 13.52 m carcass found on an islet near Dhanushkodi Island, Gulf of Mannar (Lal Mohan 1992).

iv) April 14, 1982, Leatherwood (1984) observed 7 Bryde's whales on a cruise from Madras to Trincomalee.

### Humpback Whale

i) January 23, 1941, 14.7 m (49 ft) long whale stranded on the Anjengo coast near Quilon (Mathew 1948).

ii) January 15, 1988, 14.3 m long female specimen washed ashore near Kasaragod (Lal Mohan 1992).

iii) January 20, 1988, decomposed 15 m long female specimen found at Mavila Kadappuram, near Nileswaram, Kerala - drifted back into the sea after two days and appeared on January 24 at Thaikadappuram (Muthiah *et al.* 1988).

I am not able to determine whether the last two records refer to different specimens or just to one.

The limited information available on these species in India makes the present records noteworthy.

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### 6. A COMMENT ON THE REVIEW OF "PRIMATES OF NORTHEAST INDIA" PUBLISHED IN *JBNHS* VOL. 97(3)

With reference to the above-mentioned review, I would like to point out the following errors. The review of PRIMATES OF NORTHEAST INDIA, Srivastava (1999), by Gavand (2000) has failed to detect some serious errors. The main problem in this work lies in the maps and text. Zoogeographical complexities have made *faux pas* very difficult in Northeast India, e.g., the

River Brahmaputra and many of its tributaries such as the Dibang, Manas and Sankosh are effective barriers in the dispersal of many mammals.

The capped langur *Trachypithecus pileatus* does not occur between the Siang and Dibang rivers in Arunachal Pradesh, but the map on p. 163 shows as many as three sites in that region.

What was the basis and source of these? There is no indication as to whether it was the author's own observation or other source. This area is a "no langur" zone and so far none have been sighted. If any sighting has been made, then it should be highlighted with specific data, as it would be a very important record. Even in China (Tibet), no langurs were recorded immediately to the east of Yarlung Zangbo (Siang or Brahmaputra) (Choudhury 1997, Qiu 1997).

Phayre's leaf monkey *Trachypithecus phayrei*'s northern limit of distribution in Assam is the Barak river, but the map on page 168 shows that it occurs beyond, even reaching the Meghalaya border! The author did not show the Barak river but the site shown was apparent as well beyond (the northernmost site shown on the map). The distribution of *T. phayrei* in Assam is already mapped (Choudhury 1988, 1994a, b) but the author did not review these records, although some are published in the well-known *JBNHS*.

So far, there is no record of the rhesus macaque *Macaca mulatta* in the higher areas of western Arunachal Pradesh such as Tawang district and upper areas of Kameng. The published records from Tawang (Singh 1991) were based on misidentification of Assamese macaque *M. assamensis*. Unlike other parts of Arunachal Pradesh where the primate is hunted for food, this species is common all over Tawang and Kameng, due to local tradition (the Monpas do not kill primates). But on the map on p. 143, rhesus macaque was shown to occur in Tawang and upper areas of West Kameng (2 dots each). The location of Tawang district is conspicuous on the map of Arunachal Pradesh as it forms the western extended arm penetrating inside Bhutan and Tibet.

On p. 156, the distribution of golden langur *Trachypithecus geei* did not show Chakrashila Sanctuary, or the other nearby locations totalling more than 10. Not even a single dot put for more than 10 sites! Rather, Dhubri township with a

human population of about 80,000 was shown as an isolated location. These locations are already mapped (Choudhury 1992).

In the text, perhaps the most serious matter is the observation on the feeding profile and home range of Phayre's leaf monkey in Murlen National Park, Mizoram (p. 167-8). Who has observed it in Murlen? My last visit to Murlen was in February 2001. So far, no observer has recorded it within the Park, although I was able to confirm its presence this time outside in the lower river valleys. The forest officials and staff who had accompanied all the survey trips (only a handful hence they easily remember) including that of the author's in Murlen since 1994 (it is mandatory to take authorised forest staff) did not report sighting Phayre's leaf monkey. Other observers on specific survey for this species could also not confirm it (Joydeep Bose, recipient of a National Geographic Society grant for the study of *T. phayrei*, pers. comm.). Anon (1994-99) which forms the basis for this book, as is evident from its Foreword and Preface, also does not mention sighting the Phayre's leaf monkey in Murlen. The Park is a high elevation area with most parts above 1,000 m (up to >1,600 m) but on p. 167, it was mentioned that the leaf monkey occurs up to 800 m only. Thus, the author himself has ruled out its presence in areas above 800 m, whereas the Park is higher. Then how could it occur in Murlen?

It is clear from Anon. (1994-99) that no field survey was carried out in Manipur, but the maps show some localities. What is the source of these? No mention in the text, or even in the reference section, of any published work.

Other noticeable errors, apart from spelling mistakes, were the conservation status of different species according to the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. The stumptailed *M. arctoides*, Assamese *M. assamensis* and pigtailed macaques *M. nemestrina* are protected under Schedule II (Part I) and not Schedule I (pp. 135, 140, 150 respectively). The map on



the forest type on p. 53 and the accompanying text on p. 51-54 is poor. Subtropical pine forest shown even near Guwahati city! In the Himalaya, the temperate forest areas have been shown as subtropical or vice versa.

General comments I would like to make are that in a regional work, the distribution needs to be in greater detail, e.g., the stumptailed and pigtailed macaques are confined to the easternmost corner of Arunachal Pradesh. About 30 pages (p. 85-116) on food trees were wasted, as the plant part taken by the macaque is not mentioned. Huge introductory chapters (116 pages, more than 50% of the book) could have been restricted to 20-30 pages.

Furthermore, Phayre's leaf monkey's status as per the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 has been

mentioned as Schedule I on p. 169, but as '?' on p. 186 [Table 8.1] In the same Table, the status of primates mentioned on pp. 135, 140 and 150 are contradicted, that too wrongly (Part I not mentioned). On p. 137, para 2, it is stated that the Assamese macaque occurs up to 4,000 m elevation, but the very next paragraph says it is up to 3,800 m. Again on p. 147, para 2, it is stated that the pig-tailed macaque occurs up to 1,200 m altitude, but the next para says it is up to 1,700 m. Which one is correct?

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7. "PRIMATES OF NORTHEAST INDIA" PUBLISHED IN *JBNHS* 97(3) — A COMMENT

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the note on my book "Primates of Northeast India (1999). The critic has commented on three aspects of the review and the book: the literature search, field work conducted and distribution of primates.

The sections Preface, Foreword and Acknowledgments clarify the source of data set, field work conducted, literature search, scope of the book, genesis, and the objectives of the book.

**Field Work:** It is explicitly mentioned in the Acknowledgments and other places that the

data set presented in this book is an outcome of my own field work covering 650,000 hectares of forests between 1994 and 1999, walking about 1,600 km on forests trails covering almost every state of Northeast India. I have also relied heavily on the observations of my colleagues and friends. As all this field work was carried out with many of my colleagues as part of a research team, I have taken extra care that no direct data are reported so that the academic rights of others are not compromised. This is normal academic ethics. However, more data are now analyzed and